

What Is Claimed Is:

1. A container having a central longitudinal axis, the container comprising:
a plurality of deflectable panels, each of the deflectable panels projecting from the longitudinal axis to pass through at least three curves including a first curve having a first constant radius, a second curve having a second varying radius, and a third curve having a third constant radius that is greater than the first radius; and
at least one indented portion with respect to the deflectable panel arranged adjacent to and above or below the deflectable panels.
2. The container of claim 1, wherein the second curve is comprised of a plurality arcs.
3. The container of claim 2, wherein the second curve includes an arc at its midpoint with a radius which is smaller than the radiuses of all other arcs in the second curve.
4. The container of claim 1, wherein the second varying radius is greater than the first constant radius.
5. The container of claim 1, wherein the second varying radius is less than the third constant radius.
6. The container of claim 1, further comprising more than four deflectable panels.
7. The container of claim 1, wherein there are six deflectable panels arranged adjacent to each other around the perimeter of the container.
8. The container of claim 1, wherein the indented portion extends for 360 degrees around a perimeter of the container.

9. The container of claim 8, wherein the indented portion is disposed above each of the deflectable panels.
10. The container of claim 8, wherein the indented portion is disposed below each of the deflectable panels.
11. The container of claim 8, wherein the indented portion extends around the container.
12. A container, comprising:
 - an enclosed base portion;
 - a body portion extending upwardly from the base portion, the body portion having a central longitudinal axis and including a plurality of active surfaces;
 - a top portion with a finish extending upwardly from the body portion;
 - a support portion arranged between one of the body and the top portion, and the body and the base portion, the support portion being offset towards the central longitudinal axis with respect to at least one of the active surfaces.
13. The container of claim 12, wherein the support portion circumscribes the body.
14. The container of claim 12, further comprising two support portions, a first support portion disposed between the body and the top portion and a second support portion disposed between the body and the base portion.
15. The container of claim 12, wherein the support portion is a ring indented about .300 inches from an outermost portion of the base portion.
16. The container of claim 12, wherein the support portion extends for 360 degrees around the container.
17. The container of claim 12, wherein the support portion is a ring disposed in a plane perpendicular to the longitudinal axis.

18. The container of claim 12, wherein the active surfaces include an initial region that passes through a first curve having a first constant radius, a middle region arranged below the initial region and that passes through a second curve having a second varying radius, and a tail region arranged below the middle region and that passes through a third curve having a third constant radius that is greater than the first constant radius
19. The container of claim 12, wherein the body comprises more than four active surfaces.
20. The container of claim 12, wherein a cross-section of the body in a plane perpendicular to the longitudinal axis is substantially circular.
21. The container of claim 12, wherein the active panel accommodates a vacuum-induced volumetric shrinkage of the container resulting from a hot-filling, capping and cooling thereof.
22. The container of claim 18, wherein after cooling the third radius becomes nearly the same as the first radius.
23. The container of claim 18, wherein a surface of the active panel is smooth.
24. The container of claim 12, wherein the active surfaces have side edges arranged opposite each other, the side edges of each active surface being connected to side edges of an adjacent active surface.
25. The container of claim 24, further comprising a support post formed at a junction between the side edges.
26. The container of claim 25, wherein the support portion is indented about .175 inches from the post.

27. A container, comprising:
- an enclosed base portion;
 - a body portion extending upwardly from the base portion, the body portion having a central longitudinal axis and including at least six deflectable panels, the deflectable panels having side edges extending in the direction of the longitudinal axis;
 - a top portion with a finish extending upwardly from the body portion;
 - a first indentation disposed between the body portion and the top portion and extending for 360 degrees around the container, the first indentation being offset towards the central longitudinal axis with respect to the deflectable panels;
 - and
 - a second indentation disposed between the body portion and the base portion and extending for 360 degrees around the container, the second indentation being offset towards the central longitudinal axis with respect to the deflectable panels.
28. A container of claim 27, further comprising support posts disposed at the side edges of the deflectable panels and joining each side edge of each panel to a side edge of another panel.
29. The container of claim 27, wherein the deflectable panels extend between the first indentation and the second indentation.
30. The container of claim 27, the top portion having a first shoulder adjacent to the body portion and the first indentation being offset towards the central longitudinal axis with respect to the shoulder.
31. The container of claim 27, the base portion having a second shoulder adjacent to the body portion and the first indentation being offset towards the central longitudinal axis with respect to the shoulder.
32. The container of claim 27, wherein the body portion has a substantially circular cross-section in a plane perpendicular to the longitudinal axis.

33. The container of claim 27, wherein the shoulder projects from the longitudinal axis to a greater extent than the deflectable panels.
34. The container of claim 27, wherein the deflectable panels include a top edge that merges with the first indentation and a bottom edge that merges with the second indentation.
35. The container of claim 27, wherein the side edges of each deflectable panel are coupled to side edges of another deflectable panel.
36. The container of claim 27, wherein the first and second indentations are rings formed in planes perpendicular to the longitudinal axis.
37. The container of claim 30, wherein the first indentation merges with the first shoulder.
38. The container of claim 30, wherein the second indentation merges with the second shoulder.